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For Immediate Release:

Jobs for Montana's Graduates Program wins National Award for Seventh Year in a Row

(Helena, MT) For many at risk youth there are a lot of obstacles to finishing high school, but programs like the Department of Labor and Industry's Jobs for Montana's Graduates (JMT) Program are clearing the path. That's why for the seventh year in a row, the JMG program was nationally recognized with the "5 for 5" award.

"Montana is setting the standard for other states across the country", said Labor Commissioner Keith Kelly. "Our graduation rate is 97.6% and I am proud to say the continued success of this program is a reflection of the hard work and dedication of the both the students and the career specialists."

Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG), has established five performance outcomes for students enrolled in JMG. The standards include graduation rate, positive outcomes of transitioning to work, post secondary education, military, and full-time job placements.

The JMG program is also a big success on Montana's Reservations. The graduation rate for Indian students is 92% with a 70% positive outcome after 1 year. These students typically enter the program with 5 barriers to success including: excessive absences, inadequate or no work experience, residing in economically disadvantaged conditions, low academic performance and lacking marketable occupational skills.

Students are selected for the program due to barriers they may have to completing high school and entering the workforce. In school year 2009-2010, JMG supported a network of 49 programs offering 1079 students the potential for future career development by focusing on staying in school and finding a career path suited to their interests and abilities. JMG also has a middle school program which focuses on getting students to successfully transition into high school with a start on the development of their career plans.

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